

Monument preservation as an aspect of 20th century Turkish-Hungarian relations

A case study on Gül Baba's Shrine

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Abstract: Major historical events of the 18th and 19th centuries significantly changed judgments of Ottoman-Turkish and Hungarian relations resulting from negative memories of the sultanate's occupation of Hungary in the 16th and 17th centuries. Intensifying Hungarian and Ottoman-Turkish rapprochement at the turn of the 19th-20th century coincided with the emergence of institutionalized monument preservation. This affected both buildings in Turkey related to Hungarian history and monuments of Ottoman origin on Hungarian territory.¹ Therefore, steps taken to mutually protect the respective architectural heritages can be considered a separate case study category in the history of monument preservation.

Interest in the Ottoman architectural heritage in Hungary at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries was fuelled by several factors. It was influenced by a series of cultural diplomacy gestures resulting from the general Hungarian-Ottoman political rapprochement, Turanian ideology in Hungarian intellectual life, and general interest in the art and architecture of Asia and Islamic lands in Europe. This process parallelly emerged with the institutionalisation of monument protection and the first significant steps taken to protect common architectural heritage. One of this process's key monuments is the Shrine (Türbe) of Gül Baba in Buda, which is the subject of monument conservation's earliest catalogues. Thus, the building and its conservation are closely linked to the history of monument protection in Hungary. Furthermore, the building's subsequent research and restoration are symbolic of the developing Hungarian and Ottoman-Turkish diplomatic relations.

1 For an overview of objects related to Hungarian history in Turkey, see <https://www.turkmagyarizi.com>.

This paper investigates the steps and process of restoring the Shrine of Gül Baba as a key monument in the 20th and 21st centuries. Additionally, an attempt is made to outline the main periods and phases for one of the crucial Ottoman monuments in Hungary during the 20th century, with a view to the present day and analysing a significant example of the patrimonialization process. As a result, this monument's preservation can be considered an important aspect of the period's Turkish-Hungarian bilateral relations.

Introduction: Functional definition and the main aspects of the research

During the 16th and 17th centuries, the Ottomans took possession of the Hungarian Kingdom's central territory, and it became the Ottoman Empire's northern border region for approximately one and a half centuries. This period significantly impacted the area's history. Firstly, because this region was the field of continuous battles, and both the Habsburg Empire and the Ottoman Empire used the formerly prosperous land as a buffer zone, with both the population and the townscape – the network of former settlements and built infrastructure – subject to large-scale destruction. However, alongside this destruction, the Ottoman population erected a unique group of buildings with special functions and architectural styles. These Ottoman constructions can be grouped into two main subcategories – those that were converted into a new function from formerly existing buildings (e.g. churches converted into mosques) and newly erected sacral and profane constructions to meet the functional needs of the new population.

Amongst the extant Ottoman buildings in Hungary, military architectural remains have particular importance as the frameworks of the settlements. The stone and brick fortifications intermittently reconstructed are known as *kale*, and *palankas* are the wooden-soil palisades.²

Within the urban texture, the most iconic buildings tended to be mosques. They were usually embedded into larger complexes (*külliyes*),³ which often included baths. Among this category, we may distinguish between baths using thermal water sources (named *ılıca* or *kaplıca*) and baths using heated water (*hamams*).⁴ While examples of these types have survived, the *medreses*, *mek-*

2 Hegyi (2007).

3 Sudár (2014).

4 Papp (2018).

tebs, and *hans* have generally vanished, as have the dervish lodges, or *tekkes*, although there are local examples and some are under archaeological investigation. Little is known about the residential building stock. One reason is that the new Ottoman population generally used the extant buildings. However, the 'Turkish house' in Szigetvár is a known example of Ottoman civil building stock. Groups of public fountains are rare, but their importance in Ottoman times is undoubtable; hence, the importance of the fountain's reconstruction in Pécs.

The most significant problem of the research and, therefore, reconstruction of these Ottoman buildings in Hungary is the limited number that still exist since these buildings generally vanished or changed their functions after the Ottoman period. For example, if we examine the religious buildings, according to written sources, the number of mosques and masjids operating in Hungary during the Ottoman period can be put between 250 and 300.⁵ A significant number of these buildings were not newly erected structures but were built using or modifying existing buildings.⁶ Because these structures were the most iconic examples that carried the layers of the Ottoman period's cultural memory, they were generally destroyed or modified after the reconquest.⁷ Therefore, buildings formerly used for mosques, including churches, are a promising basis for identifying Ottoman buildings that are still hidden.⁸

A unique category of Ottoman architecture, which has examples in good condition in Hungary, are memorial buildings. Defining Ottoman memorial architecture is complex since most new buildings erected in Ottoman Hungary were dedicated to a specific person. Generally, this person is the founder, possibly a nobleman registered in the *vakıfnâme*, or the emperor. From this perspective, almost all Ottoman buildings have a memorial purpose.

This paper will focus only on the buildings that have funerary functions and hence a memorial connotation; in this way, not only is the memory held by the structure, but the person's grave is also located in the building.

There are different types of Ottoman funerary memorials. A tombstone (*mezartaşı*) marks a burial site that is not bordered as a space. A shrine (*türbe*) frames a burial site architecturally. The latter type is an important type in the

5 Sudár (2009), p. 630.

6 Sudár (2018).

7 Baku & Kovács (2018), pp. 425–48.

8 Gerelyes (2011), pp. 85–8.

Ottoman architectural heritage of Hungary. Of the at least 17⁹-22¹⁰ shrines built during the 16th and 17th centuries, two can still be visited today: the Shrine of Gül Baba in Buda and the Shrine of İdris Baba in Pécs. Another is under excavation (the memorial Shrine of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent near Szigetvár, in the area of Turbék-Szólóhegy).¹¹ The total number of shrines is an open question, and many are still to be identified and archaeologically excavated. Those that can be currently visited also hold many questions as they have all undergone substantial alterations since the Ottoman period. For this reason, the study of Ottoman shrines and their positioning in relation to the empire (periphery or semi-periphery) is an important area of research in Ottoman architectural history.

Examining the history of a specific shrine in Hungary is a significant issue not only for the general analysis of Ottoman architectural history but also for cultural history. The Shrine of Gül Baba played a vital role in Ottoman-Turkish and Hungarian diplomacy, and because of this, is a unique example and indicator of the two nations' relationship. As one of the Ottoman era's best-preserved buildings, the shrine is located in the northwest of Budapest's Second District – at the edge of different urban textures: the crowded centre and a hilly, green area with mansions. Being one of the most northerly pilgrimage sites in the former Ottoman cultural world, and still attracting many visitors today, it is not surprising that it has been the subject of several studies by Hungarian and Ottoman/Turkish specialists at different periods, each of whom have shaped it to their own needs. These transformations were often symbolic gestures involving substantial and functionally relevant changes (e.g. new windows, change of the covering material of the dome). Thus, by tracing the history of the *türbe*, examining the reasons for the interventions, and also examining the actors and aspects of the current heritage conservation work, we can sketch a picture of the fate of a building erected on the border of two culturally different worlds, of its life before and after monument status, and of its contemporary heritage presentation.

The imprints of the Ottoman era are recorded in the local community's memory and continue to have an impact even after the generations that lived through the events have passed away. Ottoman rule's end also ended a coexistence that subsequent generations often sought to cover up, reform for new

9 Ayverdi (2000), p. 84.

10 Sudár (2013), p. 39; pp. 70–91.

11 Pap & Fodor (2017); Pap (2020).

functions, or demolish. The process of erasing the layers and thus transforming the past into cultural memory continued until the late 19th century; it was only possible to stop and even reverse it in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Due to this area's political and diplomatic environment, a particular need arose to restore this building's Ottoman aspects and add site-sensitive annexes, which today allow the buildings to be identified according to the different cultural layers.¹²

The interest in the Ottoman architectural heritage in Hungary during this period arose from several sources and is a complex issue in itself. To highlight the main aspects, we must first mention the political and diplomatic issues, specifically in Hungary. Besides these factors, this age was the beginning of institutionalised monument preservation in Hungary. The restoration works carried out on the Shrine of Gül Baba in different periods were the result of the actual diplomatic relations between the two countries and had a key symbolic role in them. In this sense, the shrine is not just a historical monument but a unique and prominent indicator of the relationship between the two countries.

Indeed, recording the shrine's history exceeds this paper's limit. Consequently, it aims to highlight and define some key factors that played a role in the monument preservation works carried out, and their effect on the subsequent diplomacy, scientific research, education and culture.

Initially, the building's architectural features will be analysed. Through this, the critical factors of the different monument preservation works will be examined, drawing an approximate picture of the complex patrimonialization that resulted in a contemporary cultural centre complex that developed from a sacred memorial monument of an Ottoman Bektashi dervish in Hungary's capital city. Following this, the factors that played an important role in the structural and environmental changes during the 19th and 20th centuries and the last complex heritage preservation works are examined.

The area now functions as a cultural centre and gardens with an authentically restored monument as its focus.

Gül Baba and the shrine

A dervish from the Bektashi order representing the *tasavvuf* (mysticism) of Islam arrived with the Ottoman armies fighting in the 1541 Buda campaign.

12 Baku & Kovács (2018).

He was called Gül Baba, or Father of Roses.¹³ Gül Baba died soon after the Ottoman conquest of Buda; some legends place his death at the time of the first Friday prayers in the Church of Virgin Mary, freshly converted to the Mosque of Sultan Süleyman. This act linked Buda with the domain of Islam. His funeral was attended by the most influential representatives of the empire, the padishah, Sultan Süleyman, and by the head of the empire's judiciary, the *Rumeli kazaskeri*, Ebussuud Efendi. Following the dervish's death, the third governor-general of Buda, Yahyapaşazade Mehmet built a shrine over his grave at some point between 1543 and 1548. The followers of the Bektashi dervish gathered around him and founded a lodge, or *tekke*, in its environment. Thus, it was built on the hills of northern Buda, a major pilgrimage site for the Muslim world and a valuable object of Sufism and *tasavvuf*. Although the building is now a protected monument, it remains a place of great affection and significance in the hearts of visitors and is remembered with fondness throughout Turkey and other parts of the world.

Gül Baba's shrine fits perfectly into the general category of Ottoman *türbe* buildings of the 16th and 17th centuries. In Ottoman times, the central octagonal plan had a brick-structured hemispherical dome covered with lead and a crescent finial. Its single entrance door opens towards Mecca, the Qibla's direction. Its structure is composed of a wall of limestone masonry; the interior surface is covered with a pink Ottoman base plaster containing brick dust and an unpainted white plaster. Gül Baba's grave is located below the hexagonal brick-tiled (so-called *şeşhane*) floor, also perpendicular to the direction of Mecca, above which a symbolic wooden coffin (*sanduka*) stands in the interior.

Regarding the shrine's interior dimensions and wall structure, a regular multiple of the historical Ottoman unit, the so-called *arşın* can be observed.¹⁴ The wall of the Shrine is one *arşın* thick, the contour of the exterior façade corresponds to a 10 x 10 *arşın*s grid, while the interior conforms to a modular grid system of 8 x 8 *arşın*s, and the height of the building is ten *arşın*s. This demonstrates that its interior and exterior are symmetrical on two sides, and a regular, modular grid system can be accurately applied to the shrine's plan. More-

13 Ágoston & Sudár (2002); Yılmaz (2003); Sudár (2022); Tosun Saral (2022).

14 The *arşın* is the characteristic measuring unit in classical Ottoman architecture. 1 *arşın* – also denominated as *dhirā'* – was 0.758 meters, equal to 24 *parmak*, 12 x 24 *khatt*, or 288 x 2 *nokta*. As can be seen on some Ottoman building plans, the interiors and constructions of the buildings were recorded as the integral multiples of the *arşın* unit. See: Ünsal (1963), p. 194; Necipoğlu-Kafadar (1986), p. 231.

over, the nominal size of the door is two *arşın*s. Consequently, it can be assumed quantitatively that the *türbe*'s dimensions were determined according to these units during its construction and, by this, has a regular shape.¹⁵

In addition to its regular architectural shape, the building is characterised by a single window facing the Danube. This is unique in the general architectural features of the Ottoman shrines, a building type characterized by many windows and a bright interior. Also, there was undoubtedly a front roof (porch) over the building's entrance in the Ottoman period, but it later disappeared and is now marked by two console stones. The exact shape of that roof is unknown.

The demolition of the Ottoman front roof is not the only change that occurred to the building during recent centuries. Following the Treaty of Karlowitz (1699), which officially ended the Ottoman period in Hungary, the area became the property of the Jesuits, who converted the *türbe* into a chapel dedicated to Saint Joseph. During the Jesuits' ownership, the Ottoman lead-covering was replaced by shingles, raised, and a small lantern was added, the only function of which, having no interior opening, was to modify the building's mass. Oval-shaped windows were opened in its walls. Despite the modification of the Ottoman layout, the wall and dome structure were not damaged, and the grave of the dervish was not harmed.¹⁶

The Jesuit order was abrogated in 1773, and the city took over the *türbe* and sold its land to János Thoma, a citizen of Buda, in 1830.¹⁷ In 1857, it was sold to the architect János Wagner, who built two separate villas, part of which included the *türbe*. The wing of the villa facing the Danube was built jointly to the foundations of the *türbe*, which still had the features from the Jesuit period.¹⁸ This was the situation around 1900: an Ottoman shrine with features of a Baroque Jesuit chapel in the garden of a Historicist mansion.

From the 1900s on, however, a period of gradual reconstruction began with the site's registration as a historical monument, the ultimate aim being to restore it to its original Ottoman historical state. Hungarian and Turkish experts were involved in this process, with many significant periods linked to developing Ottoman-Hungarian or Turkish-Hungarian diplomatic relations. The following points analyse the most significant aspects of this process in parallel with the sequence of reconstructions that resulted in a shrine that is both

15 Kovács & Rabb (2020).

16 Sudár (2022), p. 76.

17 Farbaki (2022), p. 100.

18 Ágoston (2022), pp. 104–5.

an authentically restored monument based on a systematic, multidisciplinary and international research project, and the focal point of a garden framed within the complex of a cultural centre. These descriptions will highlight the trends that emphasize the unique role of this monument in the developing relations between the two countries and also reflect the ideas of the time. The starting point is fittingly the ‘rediscovery’ of the *türbe*.

Sacral centre in a changing environment

Following the conquest of Buda in 1541, the hill above the “gunpowder mill neighbourhood” (*baruthane mahallesi*), rich in thermal springs and located outside Buda’s walled precinct, became a sacred centre as a result of Gül Baba’s burial there. Although its surroundings, ownership and condition have changed many times, the sacrality has not, attracting crowds of pilgrims and visitors. On the one hand, the life of Gül Baba is shrouded in many legends and mysteries, and several dervishes from Anatolia and the Balkans bore this initiatory name; however, as will be explained in more detail later, the person of Gül Baba, who took part in Sultan Süleyman’s campaign in Buda, is linked to the occupation of Buda also in a spiritual way, because, according to legend, he died during the first Friday prayer, and was thus honoured as the region’s Ottoman protector (*gözcü*). Consequently, Bektashi dervishes settled close to his mausoleum and built a *tekke* to cherish his memory. According to the contemporary sources, this *tekke* was one of the most crowded, with almost 60 dervishes and several land properties that supported the complex as a foundation (*vakıf*).¹⁹ The lodge, which was recorded in several engravings during Ottoman times and had already been damaged by the fighting and destruction that took place during the expulsion of the Ottomans, completely disappeared. However, the area’s name, above the “gunpowder mill neighbourhood,” was the Hill of Gül Baba (*Gül Baba tepesi*), which preserved the heritage of the dervish.

After the building became a Jesuit property in 1689, Christians were buried in the area. Although the building underwent several alterations referred to earlier, including the disappearance of the porch, the raising of the dome, the addition of wooden shingles and a lantern on the top of the dome, the addition of oval windows on the walls and the replacement of Ottoman sacral objects

19 Ágoston (2022), pp. 94–5.

in the interior with Christian objects, the sacrality of the place remained unchanged; Christians were also buried in the area, known as Calvary Hill (*Calvarienberg*) or the Hill of Oil Trees (*Oelberg*).²⁰

In 1773 the building first became the property of the city of Buda and then private property. In the second half of the 1880s, János Wagner built a historicizing private mansion around the shrine. However, Wagner received permission for the construction on the condition that pilgrims and visitors would still be allowed to enter the shrine. The design of the Historicist building certainly allowed it, since it enveloped the shrine and the nearby garden. One wall of the *türbe* was included in the mansion's porch.

During this period, the figure of Gül Baba among the Hungarians was more associated with an Ottoman sage who cultivated roses in the area. Thus, the gardens in the area were also associated with the *türbe*. The area began to be called the Rose Hill (*Rózsadomb*), which connected with the Ottoman-era idea of Gül Baba's hill. In addition, in 1915, the adjacent *Niedermayer Gasse*, a rising lane dotted with enclosed parapets, was named *Gül Baba utca*. Thus, the figure of the dervish was repeatedly evoked in the naming of the neighbourhood, and the *türbe* became an evocative garden folly, associated with romantic, Oriental aspects.

Wagner's lands contained a smaller mansion in the southern part of the area, where the family generally stayed. Therefore, the shrine was centrally sited in the interior garden of a mansion, but still retained the sacral function as a pilgrimage site and location for prayer. It was visited regularly by members of the Muslim community that arrived in Buda after the occupation of Bosnia, with religious leaders like Abdülatif Efendi and Hüszein Hilmi Durics saying prayers and even, according to news footage, celebrating the sacrificial feast. The idea of turning the site into an Islamic sacred centre and building a mosque next to it has been raised several times by Ottomans and Hungarians. At the suggestion of Ottoman diplomats and with the support of the Hungarian state, Mimar Kemaleddin Bey, a renowned architect of the late Ottoman and early Republican era,²¹ drew up a mosque plan for the site in 1911. A similar plan was drawn up in 1934 by Jenő Kismarty-Lechner, and similar ideas were mooted at an international workshop in 1987. Although most of these proposals failed to materialize because of their grandiosity, the building and its surroundings underwent several changes at the end of the

20 Farbaky (2022), p. 100.

21 Yılmaz (2022).

20th century, which did not detract from the building's originality. One of the driving forces behind these changes was the visitors to the building.

The shrine as a focus for visitors (emperors, historians, pilgrims, travellers, and delegations)

Among the many famous visitors who saw the building were monarchs, historians, travellers, military engineers and, during the 20th century, ambassadors, politicians and business people. Despite its small size, the *türbe* became an important pilgrimage site almost immediately after the death of the dervish, which remained so during the Ottoman period and then gained new strength in the 19th and 20th centuries. One of the first builders of Gül Baba's legends was the well-known Ottoman historian Evliya Çelebi. His records explain how the Ottomans sought to add symbolic elements to the foundation of the dervish legend because Gül Baba's death occurred during the first Friday sermon in 1541, which was recited in the newly converted Church of Virgin Mary, subsequently renamed after Sultan Süleyman.²² With this act, Buda became part of the Ottoman Empire in administrative terms and part of Islamic territory spiritually; it shows Gül Baba's symbolic importance to the Ottomans. As already mentioned, Evliya also recorded that his funeral was attended by Sultan Süleyman and the *Rumeli kazaskeri* Ebussuud Efendi, which reflects the Ottoman intention to make the mausoleum an important Ottoman pilgrimage site in the newly conquered territory. In addition to the descriptions of Ottoman historians, like Naima or İbrahim Peçevi, or foreign visitors, like Georgius Wernherus (1551), Ebu Bekir ibn Behram el-Dimişki (1660), Peter Lambecius (1666), or Eduard Brown (1669),²³ in the Ottoman period, the shrine is mentioned in the records of foundations, and during the conquest from the Ottomans in 1686. In the following years, various drawings, surveys and military siege maps of Buda gave an account of the state of the mausoleum, including, for example, engravings by Wilhelm Dilich (1600) and Alexander Mair (1602), the drawing by Heinrich Ottendorf (1663), the siege drawing by Heinrich Ottendorf (1663), the siege maps of Karl Joseph Juvigny (1686) and H. Bredekow (1686), the engraving of

22 Sudár (2022), p. 77.

23 Saral (2022), pp. 79–82.

Justus van der Nypoort (1689), and the engravings by Luigi Fernando Marsigli (c.1686), Marcel de la Vigne (1686) and Domenico Fontana (1686).²⁴



Fig. 1: *The visit of the Ottoman delegation of Sheikh Süleyman in 1877. Vasárnapi Ujság XXIV/19 (1877), p. 293.*

After the importance given by the Ottoman emperor Sultan Süleyman to Gül Baba's Shrine as a pilgrimage site, and following the term it served as a Jesuit chapel, an Ottoman sultan also played a key role in initiating the process of its rediscovery, and monument preservation works in the 19th century. Between June 21 and August 7, 1867, Sultan Abdülaziz set off on an official tour of Europe, visiting France, England, Belgium, Prussia, Austria, and Hungary. During his stay in Buda, he visited the tomb of Gül Baba and received, as an official gift, a silver urn bearing the Hungarian and Buda city coats of arms containing soil taken from the tomb.²⁵ This visit was well received in the Ottoman Empire and was supported by people in his delegation, for example, the *şehremini* (mayor) of Istanbul, Ömer Faiz Efendi, or official correspondents like Basiretçi Ali.²⁶ The visit was followed by several further visits that resulted in descriptions and drawings published in the newspapers of the time (Fig. 1–2).

24 Ágoston (2022), pp. 93–9.

25 *Magyarország és a Nagyvilág*, 31 (3 August 1867), p. 371.

26 Saral (2022), p. 22.

These visits also created an impetus for the professional studies on the Hungarian side. For the emperor, Franz Xaver Linzbauer, the doctor of the Imperial Baths, published a treatise on Buda's Turkish architectural monuments. Subsequently, Lajos Némethy published a small monograph on the Turkish places of worship in Buda; Árpád Károlyi and Imre Wellmann continued his work.²⁷

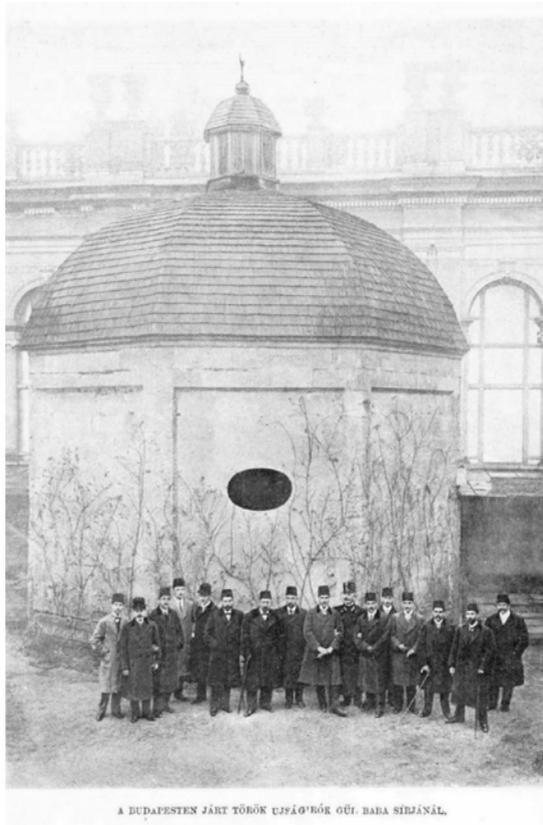


Fig. 2: Ottoman journalists visit the Shrine of Gül Baba in 1910. Vasárnapi Ujság LVII/51 (1910), p. 1065.

27 Némethy (1878).

The shrine and arts

It is important to remember that the figure of Gül Baba at one time differed for the Ottoman Turks and the Hungarians. Although the actual figure of the former Bektashi dervish was forgotten after the end of Ottoman rule, and his building was turned into a Jesuit chapel, his name and influence still survived among the Hungarian people and was associated with many fabulous tales. Hence the legend of the old rose gardener who lived on the hills of Buda in Ottoman times was born, inspiring many 19th-20th century art movements. These legends were recorded by Béla Tóth,²⁸ in the operetta Jenő Huszka, the movie directed by Kálmán Nádasdy (1940) and the movie titled Student Gábor (Gábor diák) directed by László Kalmár (1955).²⁹ These works portray an idyllic world and have helped to make Gül Baba's name known to many generations, and also his tomb, even if there is little historical basis for what they contain.

A further romantic, artistic element in the relationship between the two countries was the painting of the imagined death of Gül Baba by Ferenc Eisenhut in 1868. The painting also contains little historical authenticity: the Dervish's dress is not in keeping with Bektashi tradition, and the Buda skyline in the background evokes a city dotted with domes and minarets, even though Buda had only just been conquered when the Dervish died. However, the painting was sent to Ankara as a diplomatic gift following the proclamation of the Republic at the beginning of the 20th century; it can still be found on the wall of the Hungarian Embassy in Ankara.³⁰

Clearly, Hungarians were also aware of Gül Baba, even if their conception often contained few historically accurate elements. Thus, thanks to the popularity of the Hungarian legends and the simultaneous high-level visits by the Ottomans, the general political and diplomatic atmosphere and the efforts of institutionalised monument protection, the *türbe* also received attention.

The shrine as museum

The visit of the Ottoman emperor coincided with the first years of institutionalised monument protection in Hungary, and as such, in addition to its sta-

28 Tóth (1907).

29 Sudár (2022).

30 Ibid., p.180.

tus as an Ottoman pilgrimage site, it was also registered as a historic building on various lists. In 1855, a list of the monuments of Buda was prepared by the Lieutenancy of Buda and edited by Antal Auguszti; Péter Gerecze's inventory of historical monuments in 1906 also included Ottoman buildings.³¹

All this led to the 20th-century developments, during which, in addition to diplomatic visits and the interventions of Ottoman diplomats, the building increasingly attracted the interest of the Hungarian government and Hungarian experts. The reasons may have been diplomatic or monument protection, or a combination of both. The search for Hungarian political contacts, the Turanist ideas that were increasingly gaining strength the Muslim Bosnian population arriving in Buda with the occupation of Bosnia, and the Ottoman-Hungarian political and military fellowship of the pre-WWI period all led to symbolic gestures between the two states. This included naming the present-day Museum Boulevard after the Ottoman Emperor Mehmet V, the foundation of the Hungarian Scientific Institute in Constantinople as one of the first significant achievements of Hungarian cultural diplomacy,³² and two important stages in the history of the *türbe*. First, in 1914, the shrine was officially registered as a museum. In 1916, Enver Pasha witnessed the shrine in this condition during his visit. Second, in 1916, Islam was officially declared an accepted religion in the Kingdom of Hungary.

As a result, until the 1960s, the building increasingly lost the layers deposited on it during the Jesuit era and regained its original Ottoman shape through the professional work of Hungary's prominent scholars of monument protection.

The shrine as an educational area

Before turning to the process of the monument preservation works, a small but significant interlude is a relevant feature of the era. In 1918, a book was published by Ernő Foerk titled *Török emlékek Magyarországon (Turkish monuments in Hungary)*.³³ The book was a unique documentation of Ottoman monuments for several reasons.

31 Gerecze (1906), p. 616.

32 For a history of the institute, see Fodor (2021).

33 Foerk (1918).

Firstly, it contained the survey drawings of twenty Ottoman buildings and details from various Hungarian cities (Bács, Budapest, Eger, Pécs, Szigetvár, Érd, Temesvár), and by this, it was the most comprehensive recording of the known Ottoman remains of the era. Furthermore, the drawings were made by 2nd and 3rd-year architecture students studying at the Hungarian Royal Public Higher Architectural Industrial School of Budapest (*Budapest Magyar Királyi Állami Felső Építőipari Iskola*), who were part of a long-term education programme.³⁴ In 1912, Professor Foerk announced the so-called ‘Vacation Surveys’ for its students, with various aims on different dates.³⁵ Between 17–29th June 1917, supported by the Hungarian state and the MOB (National Committee of Monuments), Foerk supervised a study tour to survey Ottoman buildings. With the students, Ottó Szőnyi also participated in the journey as an architect of the MOB; Professor Ignác Kúnos, an Ottoman language scholar, was also involved in the works because some Ottoman inscriptions on the tombstones in Temesvár were translated into Hungarian, showing the interdisciplinarity of his programme. The surveys’ publication included an introductory text summarising the known data on the Ottoman buildings; however, in addition to its scientifically precise description, ideologically, it contains interpretation. As one of the aims of his activity, Foerk describes “supplying justice to our closest relative of genus”.³⁶ Consequently, the Turanian interpretation is highlighted. Besides the survey programme in Hungary, Foerk participated in study tours in the Balkans. The tours were organised officially by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences’s Pál Teleki, a member of the Turanian Society’s vice-presidency.

Among the various ‘pan’ movements (pan-Germanic, pan-American, pan-Slavic) at the turn of the 19th-20th century, Hungarians also began to research their hypothetical origins. It was manifested in researching the common cultural and architectural heritage links with Middle-Eastern and Inner-Asian Turkic nations, which was toned with political and ideological aspects resulting from Turanism. In Hungary, the institutionalised appearance of Turanian ideology was officiated under the ‘Hungarian Turanian Society’.

The partnership of the ‘Tahsil-i Sanayi Cemiyeti’ (Industrial Education Association) in Istanbul also supported young engineers through application-based, short-term scholarships in Hungary, declared by the circular on the

34 Kovács & Fehér (2019).

35 In 1912 and 1914, the summer surveys were organised in Transylvania, and in 1913 in Northern Hungary.

36 Foerk (1918), p. 1.

Duties of the Oriental Culture Centre and the education of Turkish youths placed in Hungarian Schools, launched on the 25th of August 1916. As a result, a number of students studied in various fields in Hungary, and seven received an architectural education.

One of them was Semih Rüstem [Temel] (1898–1946), who had an important career in Turkish-Hungarian architectural relations. After his return to Istanbul, he worked on several significant projects, was an instructor at schools, translated Hungarian architectural books, was later appointed to the Ankara Development Directorate (*Ankara İmar Müdürlüğü*) and worked in the construction of the new republic's capital, Ankara. In these works, he used the knowledge from his Hungarian education.³⁷ In the 1917 survey programme, he prepared the survey of the Shrine of Gül Baba; thus, this work is a key element of the Hungarian-Turkish architectural academic knowledge transfer (Fig. 3). The result of the Ottoman buildings' survey programme received the attention of the diplomatic representatives of the Ottoman Empire when counsellor general Ahmet Hikmet, and Abdüllatif Efendi visited the Academy in March 1918 to see the results of the survey. Rüstem's survey of the Shrine was probably known to the diplomat, who was a key figure in its preservation on the Ottoman side. Consequently, in the survey drawing, the profession of architecture, monument preservation, diplomacy and education have an interesting connection under the umbrella of Turanian ideology.

The shrine's site inspired students in later times since university students designed several projects around it. Following a long period throughout the 1980s and 1990s, initiatives to restore the Shrine and exploit its surroundings were revived occasionally, some of which were born out of diplomatic visits. In 1987, the Aga Khan Foundation supported an international workshop that focused on the design of the *türbe*'s environment. This workshop was organised by Károly Polónyi, a professor at Budapest Technical University, with participants from Hungary, Turkey and European countries.³⁸ Among the ideas presented at the workshop, the group supervised by Selahattin Önür (Ankara) proposed a project that preserved the Wagner villa and restored the hillside by demolishing the villa's retaining walls, with a Museum of Ottoman Art established in the building covering the firewalls of *Mecset utca* (exhibition, conference centre and offices). The team, led by Alison and Peter Smithson (London) and Károly Polónyi (Budapest), explored the many different aspects of the

37 Gümüş (2015) and (2022).

38 Polónyi (1987).

metropolis surrounded by the ambience of the area's complex atmospheres; they would preserve the 'rus in urbe' genius of the area with the preservation of the mansion's remains.

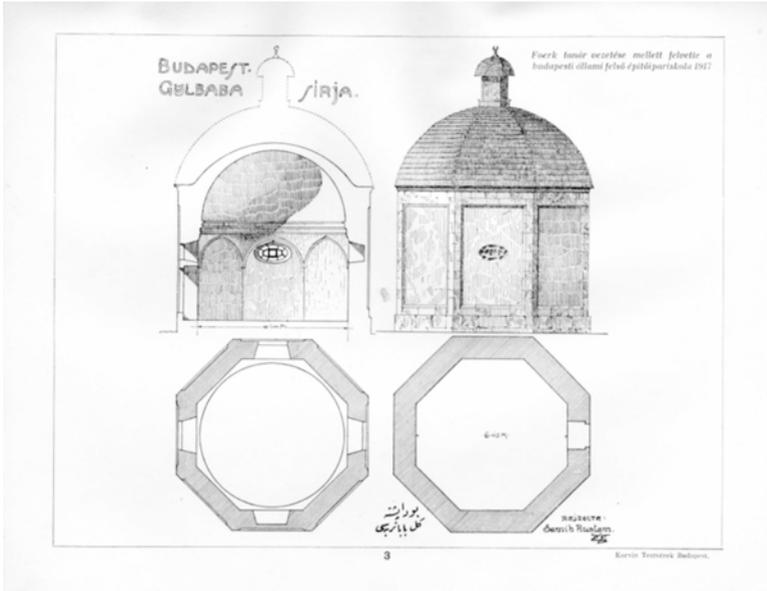


Fig. 3: The survey drawing of the shrine made by Semih Rüstem under the supervision of Ernő Foerk in 1917. Source: Foerk, 1918. p. 3.

The shrine as the focus for monument preservation works

Before the mausoleum was officially declared a museum, survey and restoration plans were drawn up for it in 1885 by the Hungarian engineer Lajos Grill. These were preserved in the Ottoman Archives and purchased by the Ottoman Consulate General.³⁹ Then, in the 1910s, several initiatives by the Ottoman Consul General Ahmet Hikmet achieved results within the building. At that time, the eminent master architect of the Late Ottoman and Early Turkish Republic,

39 Yılmaz (2021).

Kemaleddin Bey, was also commissioned to prepare plans for the restoration of the building and to design a mosque, which would have occupied a place next to the shrine and would have been based on the architect's mosque in Bebek/Istanbul. Although the ambitious initiative was washed away by the World War, with the help of the Consul General, a number of 'liturgical' objects – a lectern (*rahle*), a table (*sehpa*), a censer (*buhurdan*), and a candlestick (*şamdan*) – manufactured in the workshops of the Süleymaniye complex in Istanbul were donated to the tomb by the Ministry of Foundations (*Evkaf-ı Hümayun Nezareti*). These objects can be seen in today's exhibition in the hallway near the *türbe*.⁴⁰

The official registration of the Shrine as a museum created a new opening for the monument preservation works, led by the eminent master of the age, István Möller. Through comprehensive work between 1915 and 1916, the dervish's grave was also excavated and researched by anthropologist Lajos Bartúcz. This led to the area's opening for visitors in a more authentic form. However, the surroundings of the Shrine, where the former Wágner Mansion was occupied by apartments, were still not in good condition. In 1942, the area became the capital city's property, and in WWII, the surroundings of the *türbe* were damaged. Through the project led by Géza Lux in 1942/43, the mansion was partially deconstructed, and through this action, the shrine was freed from the mansion's frame. In 1960–62 the Municipal Inspectorate of Historical Monuments ordered and then implemented new restoration works according to the plans of Egon Pfannl, during which the existing flooring was laid, the door was renewed with a metal and glass construction, the window was covered with a wrought iron grid, the lantern was dismantled, and the dome covering was replaced with metal cladding. This restoration was intended as one of the main steps for the shrine's restoration to its original Ottoman appearance, officially preserved, and in this way, became the basis of the contemporary restoration. Later, by 1969, the above ground structure of Wágner's mansion had been demolished, and only the shrine was visible on the site.

From the Turkish side, in 1976, Ekrem Hakki Ayverdi, a leading scholar of Ottoman architecture, visited the site and prepared a survey drawing with his colleague, İ. Aydın Yüksel, during his comprehensive research work in Hungary and the Balkan countries, which led to a series of publications.⁴¹

40 Yılmaz (2022).

41 *Ibid.*, p. 34.

The next phase, which consisted of restoring the shrine and designing its surroundings, can be linked to a presidential visit of Süleyman Demirel to Hungary. The design works were led by Tamás K. Pintér. Besides restoring the monument, the *türbe*'s surrounding area was also landscaped. The most iconic element is a colonnade framing the area, designed to imitate Ottoman features, which shows the contours of the former villa and refers to an Ottoman mosque's courtyard. However, this architectural gesture created a spatial world around the shrine that did not exist in Ottoman times; although it is not an authentic Ottoman addition, it resulted in a pleasant environment. The problem with the restoration is its rapid deterioration, which will soon require comprehensive renewal. Despite this, the restoration and presentation is to be commended. It has sought to create a unified, clear picture, visually separating the 19th century and the Ottoman-era elements, and restoring them as authentically as possible together with a popular public garden in Budapest's Second District.

A combination of previous factors: The complex heritage preservation works of the shrine and its environment – and the Gül Baba Heritage Foundation

After the complex's restoration in 1996, the shrine and its surroundings deteriorated rapidly, and a new architectural intervention was necessary. One of the main cornerstones of the process was the agreement signed in February 2015 by the Deputy Prime Ministers of Hungary and the Republic of Turkey. Following long preparation and a gradual widening of the scope of participants, the main objectives of the heritage conservation works to be carried out by experts from both countries in the framework of cooperation between the two countries were established. The comprehensive investment, which used archaeology, heritage conservation, contemporary architecture and landscape architecture tools, included both the 16th-century building and its immediate and broader surroundings in three main zones: the heritage works of the Gül Baba Shrine, the inner garden area bordered by the mansion of János Wagner, and some of the surrounding public spaces – the most important of which are the garden terraces that were historically part of Wagner's mansion, and the picturesque Gül Baba Street (fig. 4).⁴²

42 Kovács (2022).



Fig. 4: The view of the shrine and the surroundings following the complex restoration project from 2015–18. Photograph by György Nagy, Gül Baba Heritage Foundation.

On behalf of Hungary, the representative of the Hungarian state was the Hungarian National Asset Management Ltd. Because the project was a priority investment, the project coordination on behalf of Hungary was provided by the Centre of Priority Government Investments Nonprofit Ltd. On behalf of the Republic of Turkey, the representative institution was TİKA (*Türk İşbirliği ve Koordinasyon Ajansı Başkanlığı* – Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency Presidency); that organisation belonged to the Prime Minister’s Office of the Republic of Turkey for most of the project period, and starting from September 2018, to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey, which opened an office in Budapest and still works for bilateral cooperation between the two countries. Both institutions delegated experts for the project, and from that point of view, it was a unique cooperation without precedent in Hungary and was also unique worldwide. The following table provides an overview of the interventions in the three project zones (Table 1).

	Area	Function	Methodology	Zones	
Existing constructions	Shrine of Gül Baba	Monument as a sacral, pilgrimage site, museum to present the building in an authentic way	Restoration only used materials verified by historical data – authentic presentation	1	
	Basement level of Wagner's mansion	Eastern part	Exhibition	The Wagner villa restoration of the remaining brick walls, contemporary building structure and mechanical elements, protecting the former 19 th -century space and providing a new function	2
		Northern part	Café, workshop rooms, permanent exhibition room		
		Southern part	Multifunctional exhibition and workshop room, office desk		
	Garden in the surroundings of the Shrine	Park and graveyard (memorial garden)	The space system of the 1996 restoration, some elements of the the newly designed park and the archaeological excavation and research marking the location of tombs		
New constructions	Entrance building attached to the northern part of Wágner's Mansion	Reception, barrier-free walkway, service functions (toilets, café)	A new building that is in harmony with the historical complex and meets modern requirements		
Landscape	Gül Baba Street, Mosque Street, Turban street, and supporting walls, public spaces and green areas surrounding Wágner's mansion	A garden complex, public spaces for general use, streets, car parks, and bus stops equipped with the necessary utilities	Arranging the monument's environment, providing a new public park, development of the district	3	

Table 1: Functional arrangement of the restoration and complex development project fulfilled between 2015–2018.

The main focus was restoring the shrine (Zone 1; Fig. 5). The basis for the restoration was the actual condition of the building, which by then was in a quasi-Ottoman state due to various restorations carried out during the 20th century, and the extensive restoration work carried out by Lajos Grill, which was protected. This was complemented by thorough research, which included the study of archival written and visual sources and a field survey of the building. The number of Ottoman-period windows in the *türbe* was the most open question; however, the wall survey carried out during the restoration confirmed the authenticity of only the window facing the Danube, which is still visible today. Above the entrance, two console stones of the former front door have been restored. The exterior wall of the building has been professionally restored in stone using materials appropriate to the site's climatic conditions and preserves the wartime bullet marks on the wall. To ensure authenticity, the metal restoration works correctly positioned the crescent top finial perpendicular to the direction of the Qibla. The faithful restoration of the historic interior was preceded by a thorough wall survey, which included the restoration of the interior wall moulding, the wall covering, the frame of the window and the door. The interior floor of the *türbe* was replaced by a hexagonal brick floor (*şeşhane tuğla*), typical of Ottoman architecture. Following the faithful assessment of the interior, the wooden *sanduka* was restored, covered with a newly embroidered, inscribed shroud and a new Bektashi headgear; two bronze candlesticks were placed on either side, and authentic calligraphic panels were positioned on the wall. The excellent cooperation of the Hungarian general designer, the experts and designers from Turkey, the historian and archaeological experts, as well as wall plaster, wood and metal conservators and the contractor, resulted in an authentic and historically accurate result.⁴³

43 The multi-level cooperation of Turkey and Hungary included several specialists on both sides. The general design of the complex was carried out by Mányi Architect Studio, with the involvement of a number of renowned architects and the landscape architect Anikó Andor on behalf of Land-A Studio. The various restoration and art history expert tasks and supervision were carried out by Szabolcs Csányi metal conservator; Vidor Kófalvi and Levente Kófalvi stone conservators; Zsolt Kóbor and Péter Zágoni wood restorator; Gizella Makoldi, plaster restorator; Judit Lászy, art historian and Ferenc Bor, art historian. The archaeological research in the area of the *türbe* was carried out by the Budapest History Museum under the direction of Adrienn Papp. TİKA, on behalf of Turkey, delegated a number of academic researchers and specialists, experts of the Directorate of Pious Foundations (*Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü*), as well



Fig. 5: The view of shrine as it is today. Photograph by Nikolett Farkas, Gül Baba Heritage Foundation.

The second priority area (Zone 2) was the internal garden in the immediate surroundings of the Shrine, framed by János Wágner's 19th-century Historicist mansion. Besides the overall landscape architectural design, archaeological research,⁴⁴ protection of the existing vegetation, and the creation of an authentic garden with small contemporary interventions were important aspects.

Although most of the ruined structures above the ground level of János Wagner's mansion were demolished during the 20th century, the most recent

as architects (Asır Proje and Ekol) who have been involved in the tasks of monument experts, designers and technical inspectors.

44 Papp (2022).

restoration has been carried out with an open-plan portico to invoke the mass of the building. The portico was rebuilt with a natural limestone column body and a glazed Zsolnay pyrogranite header. The basement mass of the villa has been restored – at the same time, an accessible entrance section has been added, which includes the functions necessary for the operation of the building and a tea room. In addition to cleaning the historic walls and partially replacing the brickwork in the villa's basement, the previously blocked-off row of the basement facing the Danube has been excavated and restored, and the southern section of the basement has been rebuilt. The historical spaces thus created, belonging to the former villa, contain permanent and temporary exhibitions. The permanent exhibition aims to provide insight into the history of Ottoman Buda, the person of Gül Baba, the world of the Dervishes and the history of the *türbe*. It outlines the nuanced and changing history of Hungarian-Ottoman and Hungarian-Turkish relations, the key ideas of the Turkish image in the minds of Hungarians, and the facts and legends associated with the figure of Gül Baba in each period based on Hungarian and Turkish experts' concepts, together with artefacts from Budapest and Turkey.

Zone 3 of the project is the landscaped area. These territories are places provided for the public, and in this sense, the project generated an urban district development at an intersection between the mansion District of Rózsadomb and the crowded centre near Margit avenue, which is frequently used by pedestrians. This part of the project consists of the three-level gardens on the terraces to the southern side of the former villa, the retaining walls bordering the complex from the east, the promenade running between them, and the former *Niedermayer Gasse*, the street renamed after Gül Baba in 1915.

Following the ceremonial opening of the complex on October 9, 2018, in the presence of the President of the Republic of Turkey and the Prime Minister of Hungary, the task was not finished. At the end of 2017, the Hungarian state established a Foundation based on a government decree to manage and operate the building. The Gül Baba Heritage Foundation's mission is to maintain the shrine and the garden complex, manage the monument and its surroundings, and operate a cultural centre and exhibition space in the complex with exhibitions, workshops and a café. In addition to permanent and temporary exhibitions, the cultural activities include organising concerts, book shows, fine arts workshops and conferences to create a cultural centre that is an important part of the capital's and the country's touristic and cultural life. On a broader level, this decree declared a strategy for preserving Ottoman-Turkish cultural heritage in Hungary, supporting projects related to the Ottoman heritage in

Hungary and the Hungarian heritage in Turkey.⁴⁵ Besides the cultural aspect, the Foundation supports educational workshops for students on monuments in Hungary and Turkey.⁴⁶

Today, the building is frequently visited; according to the statistics, around 10,000 visitors per month – a high number for Budapest. It is visited by individuals and groups from Hungary, Turkey, and many other countries. In addition to individual visitors, the institution welcomes groups and offers specialist-guided tours for all ages. In addition to civilian visitors, diplomatic delegations should also be mentioned. The shrine is an essential part of the programme during presidential and ministerial visits to Hungary from Turkey, so the interest throughout history, as described earlier, has not changed, and the building continues to serve cultural and diplomatic relations between Hungary and Turkey.

Conclusion

This paper has traced the history of an Ottoman shrine in Hungary from the time it was built for a Bektashi dervish in the 16th century, to its conversion to a Jesuit chapel after the Ottoman period, and its steady return to its original Ottoman state through the diplomatic, cultural and monumental processes of the 20th century. Thus, by tracing the history of the building, we have been able to define several factors and aspects of patrimonialization.

The shrine of Gül Baba in Buda is a monument in Hungary that is worth analysing from several points of view. Firstly, this historic building is a kind of litmus paper reflecting the relationship between two countries. At the time of its construction, it was a pilgrimage site built for the purpose of the Ottomans' spiritual settlement. After the Ottoman period, in the changed cultural milieu

45 1995/2017 (XII. 19). Government Decree on measures for the preservation and utilization of the outstanding value of the Gül Baba Shrine and its surroundings.

46 In 2021, a Hungarian-Turkish university workshop for the survey of the Neo-Gothic chapel located in Feriköy Protestant Cemetery in cooperation with the Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Yıldız Technical University, the Gül Baba Heritage Foundation, the Liszt Institute – Hungarian Cultural Centre in Istanbul and Lica Geosystems Hungary; in 2022, a university workshop for the survey of the Turkish well in Zsámbék, Hungary, and the complex development of the historical centre of Zsámbék in cooperation with the Budapest University of Technology and Economics, the Gül Baba Heritage Foundation and the Municipality of Zsámbék.

it was converted into a Christian chapel. At the end of the 19th century, a wave of Orientalist fashion enveloped it with a historicist villa. From the end of the 19th century, as a symbolic centre for Hungarian-Turkish diplomatic relations and reconciliation, it was restored to its authentic Ottoman state through different monument preservation works. Today, it is a monument which has undergone a thoroughly researched heritage preservation project and complex development of its environment by official Hungarian-Turkish cooperation, and is at the heart of a cultural centre presenting the cultural heritage of the two countries.

However, the building can also be analysed as a complex historical environment, which has undergone continuous transformation and then a series of conservation works. As well as the 16th-century Ottoman monument standing at its centre, it is surrounded by a grave garden, a 19th-century mansion created in the Historicist style, and a contemporary garden complex. Its restoration between 2015 and 2018 also resulted in the development of a distinctive part of Budapest.

We have seen that although the physical form of the building and its surroundings have undergone numerous changes, and many new ideas and narratives have been associated with the building, its sacrality has continued. The aim of the study was to define some key factors that had impact on the previously described processes. There were also religious, political and, during the 20th century, historic preservation reasons for change, with educational aspects and often high-profile visits that added impetus to the process.

The building's history is a tangible illustration of Hungarian-Turkish bilateral relations. While its sacral significance has not changed, today it is a complex of a monument, cultural centre and public park combining all the previous factors and serves Hungarian-Turkish diplomatic and cultural relations.

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